



BHĀGAVATA PRADĪPIKĀ

April 2019 | Issue 22

Bask in the Illumination of the Bhāgavatam

A Monthly E-Magazine from the Bhaktivedanta Vidyapitha with Illuminating Perspectives on the Srimad-Bhagavatam

Dedicated to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmi Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

THE FLOATING STONES

RĀMA NAVAMĪ SPECIAL

FROM THE DESK OF THE FOUNDER ĀCĀRYA

RĀMA-RĀJYA

THE REIGN OF LORD RĀMACANDRA

By His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmi Prabhupāda

There is no comparison to Lord Rāmacandra's acting as an ideal king. Indeed, people still hanker for rāma-rājya, a government conducted like that of Lord Rāmacandra.

The organizer of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is teaching everyone how to follow Lord Rāmacandra, how to follow Lord Kṛṣṇa, and how to follow Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. In this material world, we need a leader for a monarchy or good government. Lord Śrī Rāmacandra, by His practical example, showed how to live for the benefit of all human society. He fought with demons like Rāvaṇa, He carried out the orders of His father, and He remained the faithful husband of mother Sītā. Thus there is no comparison to Lord Rāmacandra's acting as an ideal king. Indeed, people still hanker for *rāma-rājya*, a government conducted like that of Lord Rāmacandra. (SB 8.1.16 Purport)

We have simply heard about the opulence of *Rāma-rājya* during the reign of Lord Rāmacandra. The streets of Ayodhyā were not only cleaned but also sprinkled with perfumed water and drops of perfumed liquor, which were distributed by elephants through their trunks. Moreover, the citizens had the opportunity to see the Lord personally supervising the affairs of the state. He was not a sleeping monarch, as we can understand from His activities in sending His brothers to see to affairs outside the capital and punish anyone who did not obey the emperor's orders. This is called *dig-vijaya*.

The citizens were all given facilities for peaceful life, and they were also qualified with appropriate attributes according to *varṇāśrama*. A class of men were *brāhmaṇas*, a class of men were *kṣatriyas*, a class were *vaiśyas*, and a class were *śūdras*. Without this scientific division, there can be no question of good citizenship. The King, being magnanimous and perfect in His duty, performed many sacrifices and treated the citizens as His sons, and the citizens, being trained in the varṇāśrama system, were obedient and perfectly ordered. The entire monarchy was so opulent and peaceful that the government was even able to sprinkle the street with perfumed water, what to speak of other management. Why should the citizens not have felt happy during the reign of Lord Rāmacandra. (SB 9.1.26 Purport)

The Floating Stones

by Gauranga Darshan Das

Nothing is impossible for the Omnipotent!

How can stones float on water!? But they did…once upon a time! In tretā-yuga, God appeared as a human being, and engaged some monkeys to throw stones in water. By the power of His name, the stones floated and thus a bridge was constructed across the ocean. Crossing this bridge, God rescued His wife, who was kidnapped by a demon.

This is a popular pastime of Lord Śrī Rāma. But a common man doesn't believe in such 'stories' calling them 'mythology.' Nevertheless, they are not myth but factual incidents recorded in our timeless scriptures. It takes a little intelligence, some deliberation and faith to understand them.

Why Can't This Happen?

It is not difficult or illogical to agree that the world we perceive is functioning based on specific laws. We see orderliness and predictability in the characteristics of the sun and the moon, day and night, seasons etc. By whose power and organization is the nature functioning in such a systematic manner? Any rational person would agree that there is some creator, controller and maintainer for this universe! And, He is 'God.'

God exercises His omnipotence in exhibiting many names, forms and activities. He resides in a spiritual abode of eternal variegatedness, and at times kindly descends into this created world in His various forms like Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Nṛsimha, Varāha and so on. There are multiple purposes for His descent, namely to protect the righteous, punish the mischievous and establish the right conduct.

The literary masterpiece *Śrīmad Bhagavatam* describes that the material universe was formed with the basic ingredients like earth, water, air, fire, ether and so on, that emanated from the body of Lord Mahā Viṣṇu, who lies in the causal ocean (*kāraṇa samudra*). After the formation of the universe, Mahā Viṣṇu entered it in the form of Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣnu, from whose navel manifested a universal lotus, that gave rise to the fourteen planetary systems.

If a person is posted under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master, it may be accepted without any doubt that the desiring person has achieved the grace of the Lord. (SB 2.9.7 P)

The modern science confirms that this universe consists of several planets in the outer space. It is only by the inconceivable power and will of the Supreme Lord that innumerable planets float like cotton swabs in the space, suspended perfectly in their orbits. If this is possible for the Lord, why can't He, in the form of Rāmacandra, make some stones float in water? After all, can the creator be limited by the laws of His own creation?

Why Should This Happen?

Another natural question in this context! If Lord Rāma had the power to make stones float on water, didn't He have the power to walk on water and make the other monkeys do it as well? Why did He have to construct a bridge then?

Yes, certainly Rāma and His party could have crossed the ocean even without a bridge. Yes, certainly Rāma and His party could have crossed the ocean even without a bridge. However, the Supreme Lord is independent. He can do anything by His sweet will. If He wants to do something in a certain way, no one has the power to question Him. Still, there are a few reasons in this regard that the scriptures reveal.

Knowing that His wife Sītādevī was in Lanka on the other side of the ocean, Lord Rāma reached the ocean. Accompanying Him was a huge army of monkey soldiers headed by Sugrīva, Hanumān, Jāmbavān and others. Lord Rāma, the Supreme Being, fasted for three days, awaiting the response of the ocean personified. When the ocean-god did not come, Lord Rāma exhibited anger and simply by His glance, all the aquatics within the ocean were struck by fear.

The ocean-god then hastily approached Lord Rāma, fell at His feet and prayed, "O all-pervading Supreme Person, we are dull-minded and did not understand that You are the master of the entire universe. Although my water doesn't impede You to go to Laṅkā, please construct a bridge over it to spread Your transcendental fame. Upon seeing this wonderfully uncommon deed of Your Lordship, all the great heroes and kings in the future will glorify You." (SB 9.10.14-15)

The ocean-god's initial inability to recognize Lord Rāma's identity, represents the rebellious mentality of the mortal beings that doesn't allow them to submit to God. But beyond this illusion lies a sublime realization of an eternal blissful life, aligned with the sweet will of the Lord.



In loving devotion, a devotee always wants to glorify the Supreme Lord for eternity just as the ocean-god desired after realizing his mistakes. He desired to see the future generations glorify Rāma for doing something that no human being had done before or could do later. Thus the Supreme Lord Rāma, by enacting this magnificent pastime, created a subject matter for our discussion, absorption and purification and to increase our love for Him.

What's Difficult for the Omnipotent?

The natural elements like earth and water have their inherent properties. The earth element in the form of stone doesn't float in water. When put in water, it sinks. But who has given them such qualities? God! If God can invest the elements with certain characteristics, He can change them as well, for a specific purpose because the material nature, indeed, is controlled by the omnipotent Lord.

mayādhyakṣeṇa prakṛtiḥ sūyate sa-carācaram
hetunānena kaunteya jagad viparivartate



"This material nature, which is one of My energies, is working under My direction, O son of Kuntī, producing all moving and nonmoving beings. Under its rule this manifestation is created and annihilated again and again." (BG 9.10)

The deep mysteries of the miraculous pastimes of God are inconceivable to a common man, but for one who has faith in His unlimited potency, such pastimes are a source of relish and nourishment.

What Does This Indicate?

Lord Rāmacandra's superhuman deed of making stones float on water declares His omnipotence and proves that He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and not an ordinary human being. He is capable of doing anything and no material conventions can obstruct His will. He was not merely advertised as Godhead or elected by popular vote.

An ordinary human being cannot change the properties of material elements, but thinks oneself so great or sometimes even God! Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, "Nowadays it has become fashionable to create some artificial God who performs no uncommon activities; a little magic will bewilder a foolish person into selecting an artificial God because he does not understand how powerful God is. Lord Rāmacandra, however, constructed a bridge over the water with stone by making the stone float. This is proof of God's uncommonly wonderful power. Why should someone be accepted as God without displaying extraordinary potency by doing something never to be done by any common man? We accept Lord Rāmacandra as the Supreme Personality of Godhead because He constructed this bridge, and we accept Lord Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead because He lifted Govardhana Hill when He was only seven years old." (SB 9.10.15 Purport)

Many people blindly believe some ordinary mortal to be God just by seeing his few magical feats. But what is their significance in comparison to the unsurpassable natural wonders that the Supreme Godhead manifests in this creation!? Śrīla Prabhupāda says that people pay lot of money to see and appreciate a magician barking like a dog, but they don't appreciate God who created millions of dogs in this world. People believe a so-called saint who 'creates' little gold, but they don't put faith on God who created millions of planets each consisting of thousands of gold mines.

Allured by the tiny wonders created by mortals, foolish people ignore the great wonders created by God. People who adore fictitious heroes in comics and movies, do not admire the real heroic acts of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, but consider them myth. All the superhuman acts of the Supreme Lord in His various incarnations indicate His Godhood and omnipotence. If only we trust the words of the scriptures and relish such wondrous pastimes of Godhead, we can make tremendous progress in our spiritual journey.

janma karma ca me divyam
evaṁ yo vetti tattvataḥ
tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma
naiti mām eti so 'rjuna

Lord Kṛṣṇa therefore says in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, "One who knows the transcendental nature of My appearance and activities does not, upon leaving the body, take his birth again in this material world, but attains My eternal abode, O Arjuna." (BG 4.9)

The deep mysteries of the miraculous pastimes of God are inconceivable to a common man, but for one who has faith in His unlimited potency, such pastimes are a source of relish and nourishment.

QUIZ CORNER



How many islands are present in bhumandala and what are their names?

Mail your answer to pradipika@vidyapitha.in with "April Quiz Corner" in the subject. The answer along with the your name will be published in the next issue.



The names of chaste women from SB:
Sati, Sītā, Anasūyā, Draupadī, Gāndhārī, Sukanyā, Mandodarī etc

Winners:

1. **Pranjal**
2. **Gangaram**

VERSE OF THE MONTH



Prerequisite for Friendship With Lord Ramachandra

na janma nūnaṁ mahato na saubhagaṁ
na vāṅ na buddhir nākṛtis toṣa-hetuḥ
tair yad visṛṣṭān api no vanaukasaś
cakāra sakhye bata lakṣmaṇāgrajaḥ

One cannot establish a friendship with the Supreme Lord Rāmacandra on the basis of material qualities such as one's birth in an aristocratic family, one's personal beauty, one's eloquence, one's sharp intelligence or one's superior race or nation. Otherwise how is it possible that although we are uncivilized inhabitants of the forest having none of those assets, Lord Rāmacandra has nevertheless accepted us as friends?
(5.19.7 – Prayer offered by Sugriva)

The Lord is so merciful upon His pure devotee that He presents His beloved devotee as more powerful than Himself. (SB 2.4.10)

CONCLUSION OF LORD KAPILA'S TEACHINGS

Srīmad-Bhāgavatam, Canto 3 Chapters 32-33]

by Vijay Krishna Kumar Das

BHĀGAVATA PRAVĀHA

The Flow of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

Lord Kapila describes about those who are dedicated to nivṛtta-karma and pravṛtta-karma and then advises His mother to just worship the Supreme Lord with devotion. (3.32) Devahūti offers her prayers to Him. Kapila after giving His final instructions departs to Gaṅgā-sāgara. Devahūti follows those instructions and perfects her life. (3.33)

Bhakti Bestows The Goals Of Other Paths

"The materialistic people perfectly perform their prescribed duties with attachment to fruitive results. They are interested in *dharma, artha* and *kāma* and are averse to *hari-kathā*. They attain Pitṛloka and after their pious credits are exhausted they fall back to earth." Thus speaking about those loyal to *sakāma-karma*, Kapila advised His mother to worship the Lord with full attention. He said that all the results of bhakti, jñāna and yoga are achieved by bhakti alone. Since bhagavān includes both brahman and Paramātmā, the realization of bhagavān by bhakti includes the realization of both brahman and Paramātmā.

Goal Of All Paths – To Realize Bhagavān

Just as a single object is appreciated differently by different senses, the Lord is one, but according to different scriptural practices He appears to be different. One can best appreciate the milk with the tongue by tasting it and not with the eyes (by seeing it), nostrils (by smelling it) or ears (by hearing about it). Similarly the Supreme Lord can be seen face to face as Bhagavān, by *bhakti* alone. He is also the ultimate destination of those engaged in *jñāna* and *yoga*. But depending on the particular process one follows, one reaches a particular aspect of the Lord. Bhakti is the best path and Bhagavān realization the ultimate. Also, there are different scriptural practices following which Lord can be perceived. They are pious actions, sacrifices, charities (for *gṛhasthas*), austerities (for *vānaprasthas*), Vedic study and discussion (for *brahmacārīs*), control of senses and mind, renunciation (for *sannyāsīs*), yoga practice, *sakāma* and *niskāma varṇāśrama* duties, understanding the nature of *ātmā*, and firm detachment.

Who Can Receive This Knowledge

Lord Kapila said, "I have answered all your questions about the four types of bhakti, the nature of time and the birth and death of the jīva caused by ignorance. These teachings are not meant for the envious, agnostics, those unclean in behaviour, proud, hypocrites, greedy, materially attached, and those who hate devotees." Hearing the words of Lord Kapila, Devahūti became free from ignorance, and offered Him her respects and the following prayers.

Peace of mind, or in other words the healthy state of mind, can be achieved only when the mind is situated in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. (SB 2.6.6 P)



Devahūti's Prayers

"Your body is the source of all the universes, and still You put Your body within the abdomen of a common woman like me. Although You are the Supreme, You appear as *Vaṭa-patra-śāyi* and lick the toe of Your lotus foot. Even a caṇḍāla who chants Your name, hears, remembers or offers obeisance to You immediately becomes qualified to perform Vedic sacrifices. What to speak of persons who see You? They are glorious even if born in caṇḍāla families, whose tongues are chanting. They must have executed austerities, fire sacrifices, taken holy bathes, achieved good manners of Aryans, and studies the Vedas. I offer my obeisances to You, who are Viṣṇu, Brahman, the Supreme Person, the object of meditation of the purified mind, the destroyer of the influence of three modes and the repository of the Vedas."

Kapila's Final Instructions

Hearing the words of His mother, Lord Kapila became very satisfied and said, "By following this easy path of bhakti that I have instructed to you, you shall very soon be liberated, even within your present body. Please have faith in these instructions that are practiced by those who know the truth, and which will give you fearlessness. Those who are not conversant with these will attain death." Lord Kapila then took permission from his mother and left home.

Pain of Separation

As instructed by Kapila, mother Devahuti engaged in bhakti in that house of Kardama Muni. The home of Kardama was so opulent that it was sometimes envied even by the higher denizens. Saintly Devahuti, in spite of her many possessions, gave up all such comforts. She was only sorry that her son was separated from her. Due to intense austerities her body became thin and her hair matted. She was aggrieved at the loss of her son, just as a cow is affected when her calf dies. Meditating upon her son, the Supreme Lord, she quickly became unattached to her nicely decorated home.

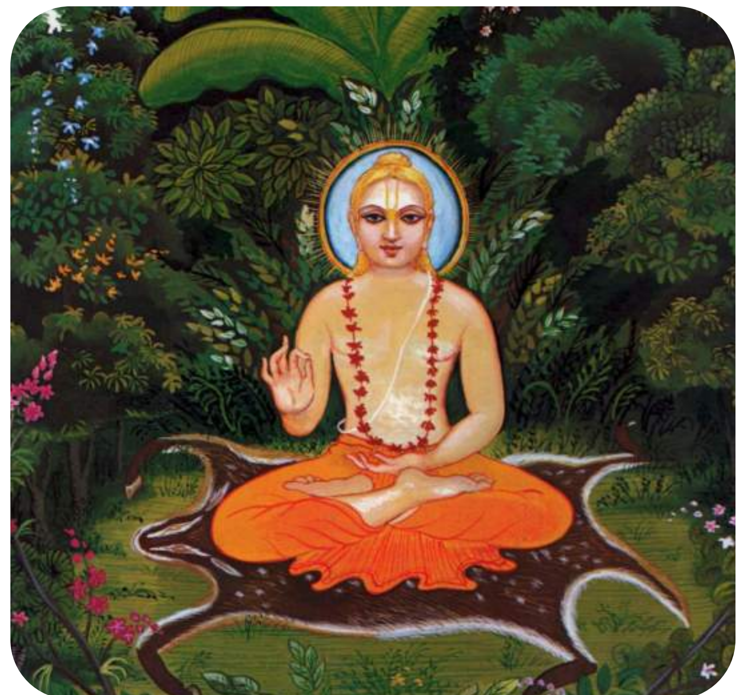
Devahuti's Achievement

Devahuti's mind became fixed in Bhagavān, and she automatically realized the knowledge of Brahman. She attained bliss and all material pangs disappeared, as she was freed from material designations. Due to attaining eternal trance and freedom from illusion, she forgot her body. By following the principles instructed by Kapila, she became liberated and quickly achieved the Lord, without difficulty. She attained perfection in the sacred and famous place of Siddhapada. The material elements of her body melted into water and are now a flowing river, which is the most sacred of all rivers. Anyone who bathes there also attains perfection.

Phala-Śruti

Lord Kapila left with the permission of His mother and went towards the northeast (in the direction of Gaṅgā-sāgara). He was praised by the Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Gandharvas, sages and Apsarās. The ocean offered Him oblations and a place of residence. Even now Lord Kapila is staying there in trance for the deliverance of the three worlds, and all the *acaryas* of the system of Sāṅkhya philosophy are worshipping Him. One who hears, reads or expounds this knowledge, becomes a devotee and attains the lotus feet and the abode of the Lord, who is carried by Garuḍa.

End of Canto 3



Only when the Lord is satisfied with the devotional service of the devotee does He impart knowledge. (SB 3.5.4 P)



A lamp, the eye that views by the light of that lamp, and the visible form that is viewed are all basically non different from the element fire. In the same way, intelligence, the senses and sense perceptions have no existence separate from the supreme reality, although that Absolute Truth remains totally distinct from them. (SB 12.4.24)



As long as we are in this material world we have so many desires to fulfill, but when we come in touch with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, we immediately become perfect and fully satisfied, just as a child is fully satisfied when he comes to the lap of his mother. (SB 8.5.48 P)



If a person unaware of the effective potency of a certain medicine takes that medicine or is forced to take it, it will act even without his knowledge because its potency does not depend on the patient's understanding. Similarly, even though one does not know the value of chanting the holy name of the Lord, if one chants knowingly or unknowingly, the chanting will be very effective. (SB 6.2.19)

ANALOGY ARENA

As a king sometimes punishes or rewards someone to maintain law and order, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, although having nothing to do with the activities of this material world, sometimes appears as various incarnations according to the time, place and object. (SB 8.5.22 P)



Just as a father is disturbed when one son mistreats the father's other children, the spiritual master is very displeased if a proud disciple insults or mistreats the guru's other disciples. (SB 12.6.63)



As the father and mother are the friends and maintainers of their children, as the eyelid is the protector of the eye, as the husband is the maintainer and protector of a woman, as the householder is the maintainer and protector of beggars, and as the learned is the friend of the ignorant, so the king is the protector and giver of life to all his subjects. (SB 6.4.12)



To change the consciousness from ignorance to passion or from passion to goodness does not really solve the problem. One must come to the transcendental platform; otherwise life's mission is never fulfilled. (SB 5.11.4 P)

PARI PRAŚNA



Question: **What are the different types of satisfaction and what is real satisfaction?**

Answer: There are different types of satisfaction. Karmīs are satisfied in their fruitive activities, jñānīs are satisfied to merge into the effulgence of Brahman, and devotees are satisfied to engage in the Lord's service.

Manuṣyāṇāṁ sahasreṣu: [Bg. 7.3] out of many thousands of persons, one may endeavor for liberation, and of many thousands of persons attempting to become liberated, one may achieve liberation from the anxieties of material existence and become self-satisfied. Even that satisfaction, however, is not the ultimate satisfaction. The jñānīs and the karmīs have desires, as do the yogīs, but devotees have no desires. Satisfaction in the service of the Lord is called akāma, freedom from desire, and this is the ultimate satisfaction. (SB 5.1.1)

Question: **How can perfection in different fields of material science be achieved?**

Answer: In every department of material science, there is a perfection to be achieved, and to achieve it one must consult the Vedic literature.

The heavenly physicians - Aśvinī-kumāras offered youthful life to Cyavana ṛṣi who was advanced in age. Indeed, great yogīs, with their mystic powers, can even bring a dead body back to life if the structure of the body is in order. For example, Śukrācārya by his medical treatment had brought Bali Mahārāja's dead soldiers to life. Modern medical science has not yet discovered how to bring a dead body back to life or bring youthful energy to an old body, but we can understand that such treatment is possible if one is able to take knowledge from the Vedic information.

Question: **Why is the living entity unable to see or understand the Supersoul? How can he realize the Supersoul?**

Answer: As the sense objects [form, taste, touch, smell and sound] cannot understand how the senses perceive them, so the conditioned soul, although residing in his body along with the Supersoul, cannot understand how the supreme spiritual person, the master of the material creation, directs his senses. (SB 6.4.24)

The Supersoul is realized when one is eager for liberation from the unlimited varieties of material life. One actually attains such liberation when he engages in the transcendental loving service of the Lord and realizes the Lord because of his attitude of service. (SB 6.4.28)

Question: **What is the importance of receiving mantras in a bonafide sampradaya?**

Answer: All mantras should be received through the authorized guru, and the disciple must satisfy the guru in all respects, after surrendering at his lotus feet. In the Padma Purāṇa it is also said, *sampradāya-vihīnā ye mantrās te niṣphalā matāḥ*. If one wants to advance in spiritual power, one must receive his mantras from one of the bona fide sampradāyas; otherwise he will never successfully advance in spiritual life.

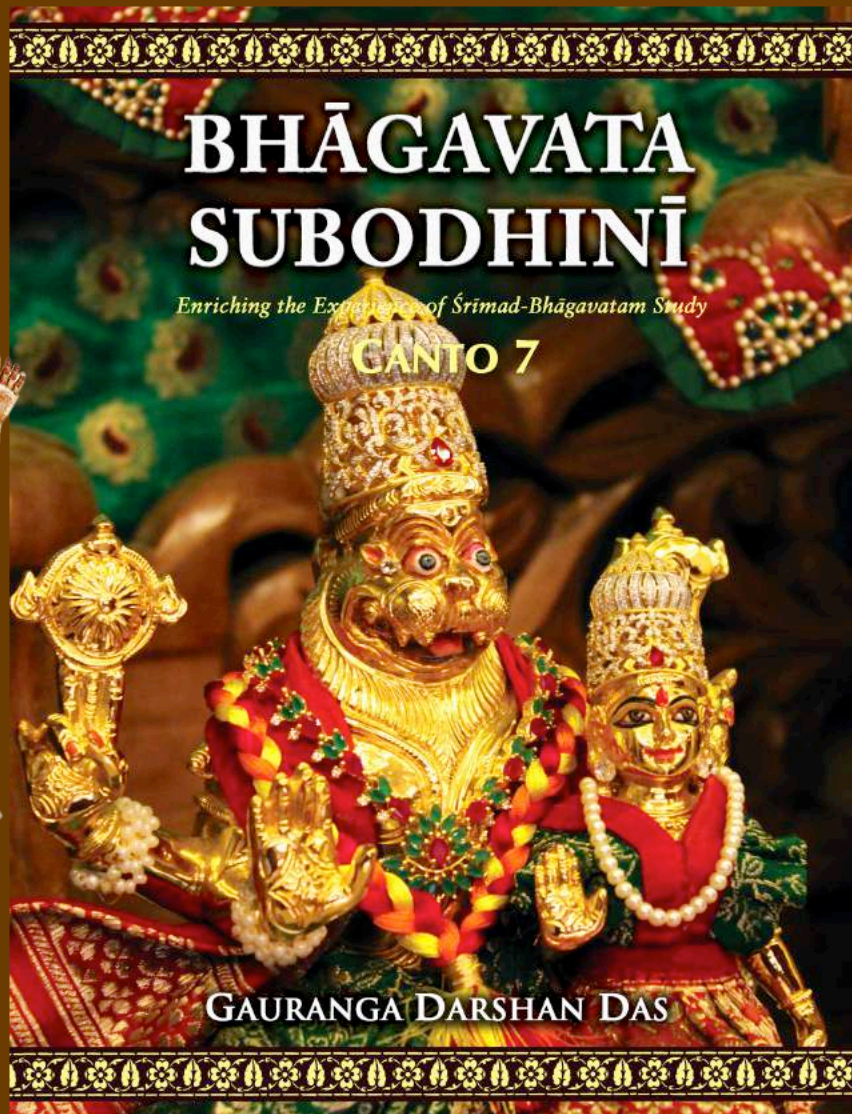
There are four sampradāyas, or disciplic successions, namely the Brahma-sampradāya, the Rudra-sampradāya, the Śrī-sampradāya and the Kumāra-sampradāya. (SB 6.8.42 P)

Mail us at pradipika@vidyapitha.in your questions on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. Answers to shortlisted questions shall be published in the next issue of Bhāgavata Pradīpikā.

If, by the grace of the Supreme Lord, a devotee achieves extraordinary opulence, he utilizes the opportunity for the Lord's service. He is not disturbed by the opulence. (SB 5.6.1 P)

Coming Soon





BHAGAVATA SUBODHINI Simplifies The Apparent Complexity In Understanding The Bhagavatam, By Uncovering and Integrating The Explanations Of Srila Prabhupada And The Previous Acaryas, And Thus Caters To The Taste And Need Of Avid Readers, Scholars, And Even Newcomers To The Srimad-Bhagavatam

Watch Gita Subodhini promo here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Wd6THGgHPU

Register for our Online Course http://www.vidyapitha.in/sign-up-for-bhakti-vedanta-vidyapitha-courses/

NOMENCLATURE

SB: Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam
CC: Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta
BG: Bhagavad-gītā
BS: Brahma-saṁhitā
1.1.1: Canto 1, Chapter 1, Verse 1
1.1.1 P: From Śrīla Prabhupāda's purport to SB 1.1.1 (If it is beyond Canto 10 Chapter 13, it is from the purport of Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples)
1.1.1 V: From Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravarti Ṭhākura's commentary on SB 1.1.1.

PUBLISHED BY

Bhaktivedānta Vidyāpīṭha Research Center, ISKCON Govardhan Eco Village (GEV), Galtare, Hamrapur (P.O), Wada (Taluka), Palghar (District), Maharashtra, India, 421303.

To subscribe, please visit our website www.vidyapitha.in. For any comments or feedbacks mail us at pradipika@vidyapitha.in

It is the duty of everyone to mold his life in such a way that he will have a profitable next life. Just as a boy is educated in order to become happy later, one should be educated in this life in order to attain an eternal and prosperous life after death. (SB 4.18.3 P)